

SAN JOSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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INTERVIEWEE: Professor John V. DeVincenzi
San Jose State University Art Professor Emeritus

SUBJECT: Family background, musical career, teaching career, art
gallery, Italian American Heritage Foundation

INTERVIEWER: Marcella Elliott, SJHM Volunteer

TRANSCRIBER: Evelyn Cannon, SJHM Volunteer

Introduction by Marcella Elliott: The following is an interview with Professor John DeVincenzi, San Jose State Art Professor Emeritus, on September 10, 1992 in Professor DeVincenzi's art studio at his home in San Jose, 1500 Keesling Avenue. The interviewer is Marcella Elliott working for the San Jose Historical Museum Oral History Program.

JVD = John V. DeVincenzi

ME = Marcella Elliott

ME I would like to start this morning with family background. Would you tell me just a few of the things that you have down here that your parents _____ (voice trails off and is inaudible).

JVD Well my dad was the last of nine children to leave the area of Genoa. It's actually a little small town called Valiere Salibre(?) and it's near the Italian Riviera of Porto Fino and San Margarito, part of those areas up in the hills; it was a small town, it was quite quaint. He

left when he was 21. My mother was 16 years younger than my father so she never knew him when they were in Italy even though they lived only about a mile and a half from each other. And my dad went to San Francisco and they had friends and some relatives -- some of his brothers were there -- and got into the drayage business, horse and buggy.

ME What are the dates he came?

JVD Well he came to this country in 189__, uh, let's see, it would be 1898, and had gone up to Volcano to visit his oldest brother whom he had never seen, and it was during the time of the earthquake, 1906, and my dad was in Volcano, California, at the time of the earthquake and could not return because the tracks had been torn up simply from this terrible earthquake. He and my mother met in Oakland and, you know, there was this difference of 16 years, but they were married in Oakland and my dad got into the garbage business in Oakland. There were several companies, four or five companies I think at the time, and he was instrumental in merging these companies into one company which became the Oakland Scavenger Company. Then later two of my sisters were born there in Oakland and later in 1916 he was asked to come to San Jose because San Jose had two small garbage companies and

there was some element of dissention between these companies. And my dad had a brother here and some relatives and they asked him to come to San Jose and he was instrumental in getting these two companies to merge into what became the San Jose Scavenger Company and he became its first president in 1915. So my background, you know, deals with that area or that kind of environment. And I had a sister who was born here and myself and I've got a younger brother.

ME You were born in?

JVD I was born on March 23, 1921.

ME In San Jose?

JVD In San Jose.

ME And when your father was in San Francisco _____
(remainder of question inaudible).

JVD Oh yes, they all lived in the North Beach area, which was the Italian district then it still is today as I think you know.

ME (Question inaudible.)

JVD No, he didn't know, no, well Giannini was born in San Jose I think.

ME Right.

JVD And it's only later that he with his stepfather moved to San Francisco. No, no he didn't know Giannini.

ME I know you donated the _____ (inaudible).

JVD Yes, well I didn't personally but the Italian American Heritage Foundation did. Yes and that was 1976.

ME It's there now. I know we talked about it.

JVD I'm one of 15 people who started the Italian American Heritage Foundation and then we started it primarily because the then existing Bicentennial Commission, a commission composed of a variety of people in San Jose and including some of our political figures, were trying to program something for the nation's birthday in 1976 and then San Jose's Bicentennial birthday in 1977. So they needed somebody to head a program that at that time dealt with the national military band which was touring the United States and a few foreign countries also. And with the combined efforts of the San Jose Mercury News

and Chamber of Commerce and the Italian American Heritage Foundation we brought the band here and had a program over at the CPA and we taped it, Channel 11 taped -- we had to pay something, as I recall I think we paid seven thousand some ought dollars for four hours of taping. Later on we got this tape and merged the slides of old and new San Jose in with this music and performance because there were performers involved in the band also, singers for instance, and we merged them together and with the help of Channel 11 and we had a program that was called "San Jose Salutes America" and that was aired in 1976 a couple of times at least and nationally and Channel 11 even submitted that for a state contest in programming and they got an honorable mention.

ME (Question inaudible)

JVD Well no, we have the tape now and we've made a 16mm version and we also have the smaller version to put on regular VCRs.

ME Okay, good to know that.

JVD But anyway, we formed this organization that at the time we called the Italian American Bicentennial Association but we were becoming so popular that people who were

interested and wanting to join that in 1976 we simply incorporated into the organization that we now call Italian American Heritage Foundation.

ME I'll probably come back to that later but let's go back to your being born in San Jose in 1921 and then your schooling, you said your grammar school was St. Mary's.

JVD I did go to St. Mary's from the first to fifth grades.

ME And that was on Third and Reed?

JVD That was on Third and Reed and you have to understand that I grew up in a neighborhood that was very much Italian.

ME What street did you live on?

JVD On a little street that's called August Avenue. It's between Margaret and Virginia off of Twelfth Street, right near the Coyote Creek, and the reason for that is that the local San Jose Scavenger Company had its barn at the end of that street and at one time the duck grounds was on the corner of Thirteenth and Margaret Street, now there are residential houses and everything around there. And the August Avenue was dirt, I can remember when they

came in and paved that, so when I started the first grade at St. Mary's I could not speak English, I spoke only my Genoese dialect, so I had to stay in first grade for two years.

ME Were there Notre Dame nuns there?

JVD Notre Dame nuns because Notre Dame High School was across the street, you know, and St. Mary's Church was there across the street.

ME Now there was a German parish.

JVD German parish, exactly, for many years. And from there I went to Woodrow Wilson Junior High School.

ME And that was on what street?

JVD That was on Vine Boulevard, no that's what they call it now Vine.

ME (Comment inaudible)

JVD Exactly, you had Almaden and Vine in that area. And from Woodrow Wilson Junior High School I went to San Jose High School.

ME And San Jose was then on?

JVD On the San Jose State University campus where one of the
administration buildings is now, right on the corner of
Seventh and San Fernando, and across the street you had
the San Jose Technical High School. But they were
interesting times, everything was so small at the time
and we were the only high school....

ME In the whole town?

JVD In the whole, yes.

ME And then you went to San Jose State.

JVD Not before the war.

ME Oh, okay.

JVD No, I graduated in February of 1941, mid-year, and then
too I was a musician, I had started a combo when I was,
I think, 18 years old.

ME Right, playing the accordian. I remember that, I was
gonna ask you that.

JVD Playing the accordian (chuckling).

JVD And so we were playing in a variety of bars and places like that around, even though I was younger than the legal age, but we were still playing in many of the bars in San Jose. And I kept playing as a musician, oh, up until my time in the army, which started in January 1943, but those two years between 1941 and 1943 I worked as a musician five nights a week and I'd go work on my dad's, what do you call it, garbage trucks in the morning because I had been going with him even as a youngster and he taught me a great deal; I owe a great deal to my dad for teaching me how to lift so that I was able to lift a great deal without doing injury to my back and things like that to any extent. So from three o'clock in the morning to around 10 I'd work on the trucks, come home and grab maybe a couple of hours sleep and go to work over at Franco's Super Market on Fifth and Santa Clara Street. You remember that?

ME (Comment inaudible)

JVD And my wife was a secretary there, at the time she was simply a girlfriend, so she helped to get me a job clerking and so from around, oh, one o'clock until 6-6:30 I would be clerking, then I'd come home and get something

to eat and get a little rest and go out and play again as a musician. And I did that for those two years until I went into the army.

ME What places did you play at? Was it the same one or different?

JVD Different places. Oh gosh, my first job, I think, was in a little place over on First Street; there's still a little small newspaper article on it and it was called "Hamburger King", and it was a bar and a nightclub and it was across the street from where the Sun Garden Cannery is on First Street where First becomes Monterey Highway, in that area and you have Alma Street, First and Alma, you have Southern Lumber in that area. Well, across the street on the west side of First Street you have a small bar. I think that was our first job, yeah.

ME Can you remember any others in town?

JVD Oh, I played Lou's Village, I played there for a little while, and even some special jobs like weddings over at what was then called the Hawaiian Gardens, and a lot of wedding jobs and parties and things like that, you know, on weekends and those were at various places. I'm constantly confronted by people whose wedding I had to

play and they're reminding me now after all of these years (laughter). And up the highway in East Palo Alto, we played there for oh gee a long time, at a nightclub that was called the Dumbarton, Jim's Dumbarton Club, in East Palo Alto. I think we played there for a good seven or eight months.

ME (Question inaudible.)

JVD Old San Joseans might remember the old Cherry Inn, I think it was over on the corner of what is now Eddy and Thirteenth Street, somewhere in that area. And down Thirteenth Street there was another nightclub called The Pine Inn and I remember playing there for, oh I don't know, a good five, six months.

ME Well that's great. There may be some musical historians that would be interested in that subject.

JVD Must be an old-timer.

ME Right, well that's what they are at the Museum. Okay so let's see, school, San Jose State, all right. Oh, you went into the war did you? Did you go into the service actually?

JVD Yeah.

ME Where did you serve?

JVD Well I finally went to the European theater starting and then going into Belgium and France and Germany; I spent most of my time in Germany, I went into the Heidelberg area mostly.

ME In the army?

JVD In the army (clearing his throat). It was 1255th Combat Engineers. But prior to that when I had gone into the army, I went into what was then called the "Triple A Anti-aircraft Artillery", but I lost a finger and I'd like to claim some heroic event perhaps but it was simply a fist fight. But somebody had lost a canteen and they were asking everybody about this canteen and none of us knew about it, but one night when most of us were at the camp PX he apparently had gone through everybody's bag and found his canteen in my bag. Now we slept next to each other, it's possible that in cleaning -- we cleaned every day and rearranged -- so it's possible that I may have put it in my bag or somebody could have put it in there; but regardless, and when I came into the building he accused me of stealing it and swung and hit me in the

chin and I still have the scar, a slight scar on it. So we began fighting and in the process I hit him in the teeth and his teeth broke and stuck in my finger, and it was called a human bite and the worst _____ and the next morning it was simply swollen up like a tennis ball and unfortunately the Camp Hahn -- this was in Riverside, California -- Camp Hahn Hospital simply did not take very good care of it and it turned into gangrene. I was transferred to the Attorney General Hospital in Palm Springs, California where I tried to get them to save the finger anyway, I could work it back later, and the Major Johnson, whose name I still recall very vividly, simply got my finger and squeezed it and his two fingers touched; he says, "You have nothing in there." So they had to amputate and I had blood poison so it took a long time for my hand to heal and I kept getting these infections all over my fingers and I've got scars all over, you know, where my fingers would blow up four or five times the normal size and they couldn't understand that. And later when I had been transferred out of my anti-aircraft artillery organization, I was in Columbia, South Carolina, Fort Japs, and I had another infection on the fingers and was hospitalized again. My first year in the army I was in the hospital ten months, in and out you know. And penicillin had been discovered and they were experimenting on me and they were trying

this penicillin and I got 88 shots of penicillin and apparently that did it because I never had another infection after that.

ME Now are you lefthanded?

JVD No, I'm righthanded and fortunately the Major over at Camp _____ General Hospital inserted a stainless steel tube up my hand and left the wound open so that he would drain out all of the poison that was up the hand and as a result I saved the joint so I have a smaller hand.

ME You can't tell.

JVD Well, because I've learned to be graceful with it.

ME I wouldn't have even noticed it _____.

JVD So anyway, this contributed to a change in my life, in my profession. And I had been doing art, all my art was self-taught until later after the army I came back and went to San Jose State and I was a 25-year-old returning GI and took my first formal art lesson.

ME When you returned to San Jose State, what did you major in?

JVD I actually majored -- if you were to check my records, you'd see that I entered San Jose State as a music major and an art minor because music was still, even though I could never become great as a musician, performing musician....

ME Well this would be a problem with the accordion, wouldn't it?

JVD Yeah, it's the most important finger on the left hand. And the small finger on my right hand gradually became worse; I apparently was born with this, I can't actually fold the finger. I've never let it bother me but it did contribute to a lesser performance which eventually bothered me. And so these two handicaps made me aware of the fact that I could never become great as a musician, good but not great, and I think my interest shifted from the musical arts to the usual performing arts. It took me one -- in those days we had quarter sessions at San Jose State -- it took me one quarter to realize that I _____ so I switched and went into what was called "Commercial Art" in those days, now it's called "Graphic Design", but commercial art and with a music minor and it took me again another quarter to realize that I did not have the nature to stand the deadline problems of commercial art; I was much too

independent for that so I switched and went into the so-called "Fine Arts" and teaching credential and so I graduated with that actually.

ME Did you teach that in the high school _____?

JVD No, when I graduated San Jose State -- see I entered in April of 1946 and I took advantage of the GI bill and I graduated in December of 1949 and I went over to Stanford. I was offered a job at San Mateo Union High School because I had done some student teaching there and they did offer me a job but I wanted to go on and get a graduate degree so I went to Stanford in December of 1949 and graduated there in September of 1950. And while I was a graduate student in the Education Department over at Stanford, a Dr. Bird needed assistance to do a variety of things; I was hired even though I was a graduate student, I was hired as a quarter-time faculty member to teach a course in color theory.

ME At Stanford?

JVD At Stanford University, yeah. This was not in the Art Department, the Education Department. Well I graduated there in September and I had applied at a variety of places and was even offered a job in the Pasadena,

California area but I kept turning these things down. I had my work here and I was a musician here yet and I still was interested in musicians; I was making a good part of my living playing as a musician.

ME Still?

JVD Still, yeah, oh up until 1960. But later in September I got a call from San Jose State. A committee of former teachers of mine and the department chairman asked me to come in and in the process of discussion they asked if I would like to teach there. And that to me was really something 'cause I had never even felt that I would end up at San Jose State so soon after being a student there and having very little formal training to begin with. So I was there from 1950 until I retired in 1991.

ME Forty-one years.

JVD Forty-one years.

ME (Question inaudible.)

JVD When I was in the Attorney General Hospital in Palm Springs after this operation on the finger and I was recuperating, they gave me a furlough and that was in

1943, June of 1943, and I came home and simply told my then girlfriend that we were gonna get married.

ME You told her. (Laughter)

JVD She claims I did. I think it was probably just a little more subtle than that. So in a matter of a week's time we made arrangements for a wedding, a big wedding. We held it at my folks' place _____ and we had at least 300 people there and all of the excesses that a big wedding usually has, you know, with the dresses, and that was June 6, 1943.

ME And now is there children, do you have children?

JVD I have two girls; one was born just at the time that I graduated from Stanford in 1950, my older daughter, and my younger daughter was born well about 7 1/2 years later, 1958.

ME (Question inaudible.)

JVD My older daughter is Nancy, Nancy Ann, whose married name now is Melander, and my younger daughter is Marcia and her married name is, oh gosh you know I....

ME (Chuckling) we probably have it in here somewhere.
Calderone.

JVD Calderone, yes. I'm saying this because her husband was adopted by the step father and his name for years and years and years, you see, was Holland, David Holland. And so later, and this is just a couple of years ago, he did some research into his family history and discovered that he had this father whose name was Calderone and simply had his name changed to Calderone.

ME (Comment inaudible.)

JVD Yeah. And he's a contractor in the Phoenix, Arizona area.

ME Do they have children?

JVD They have two children, a boy and a girl, and my older daughter has three children, two boys and a girl.

ME Do they live here?

JVD They live here in San Jose.

ME All right, and now you're at San Jose State starting '50-

'51. Okay, through the years specific accomplishments
_____ (remainder of sentence inaudible).

JVD Well, you have to realize that when I was hired in 1950 we had about 19 -- 18 or 19 -- faculty members so it was really quite small compared to when I retired last year, we had about 102 faculty members so you can see the structural change that took place in those years. So I like to think that I contributed to the growth of that Art Department because I was on many hiring committees throughout the years and I always chose people who had opposite viewpoints from my own because it was the only way to eventually get something that you could call significant as an Art Department and so maybe I made that contribution, one of the people who made that contribution.

ME Who were some of the people that you hired _____
_____?

JVD Oh many of them. You have people like John Battenburg, who is really an internationally known sculptor, people like that, and he's retired now; John Hunter, of course, _____, Hunter has a good reputation; people who have contributed, Will Nelson, I can go on and on with these people. They in turn made their own contributions

and I think lent to the institution to the point where we ultimately were one of the perhaps two or three largest Art Departments in the United States, and I like to think maybe one of the best too.

ME How about through the years the changes, I know that you got a new building and that would mean that you got involved in that.

JVD 1960 yes, we did get a new building and unfortunately the (clearing his throat) construction was still under the direction of the California State of Architectural Design, I think it was called, something like that, so you had to deal with state architects unfortunately who were not that qualified. The one who designed our Art Department and was the same individual who had designed all of the mental institutions in California at that time (ME chuckling) and this sounds amusing but we researched it and it was quite true. So even though we worked on plans for a number of years, we ultimately got maybe 8-10% of what we asked for: in building orientation, how it should face, and the sky-lighting and the size of rooms and the things that you need in rooms and things like that. It's a fairly decent building but it is not an ideal building for today's art and we _____ that, overlooking it but we simply did not have the kind of

people who could contribute to that sufficiently. While at San Jose State I was asked to be department chairman four separate times and I had seen what department chairmen should give to people who took that job. You had to take it for four years and in that time period you really gave up too _____ and you gave up your own performances and artists and I didn't want to do that for four years. I was Interim Chairman during summer sessions when summer sessions were very important and the last time I was asked the Department even signed a petition asking if I would accept the chairmanship, a nice gesture and I'm very grateful for that and I still have a copy of that in my luggage. But I wrote back a letter thanking them very much but I still loved teaching and my own performance too much.

ME Well next now let's talk about establishing the Fine Arts Center. Now you've written a long list of all the organizations you belong to.

JVD And they're not all on there either.

ME I'm sure they're not, right, so I think we can just use those because of documentation, but let's take everything pertaining to the Fine Arts Center process _____
_____ (voice trails off and is inaudible).

JVD It started with my acceptance into the membership of the San Jose Art League in 1948; I was still a student, and the San Jose Art League had developed an interest in doing something for the community, a community center, an art center of some kind. So I got involved in those early early committees doing a variety of things and then the City organized with the help of the San Jose Art League -- there was always the San Jose Art League involved in there somewhere -- and they got some of the other organizations to form various committees. There was one that was called even an Art Association organization and it was composed of photo groups, performing arts groups and visual arts groups. So we met, you know, seven or eight times throughout the years and in fact there's a grand brochure on one of those. By the way, you said you wanted a photo and I don't really know what the (sound of papers being turned).

ME I'd like to have this one.

JVD Which one?

ME (Answer inaudible) And I like the others too.

JVD (Sound of papers again) Huh, thought I had that here. Oh here it is, here. This is one of them _____ a

brochure that we have put together. Did this come from....

ME Norm Maneta was the Mayor.

JVD At that time.

ME Okay, so you wanted to start an art gallery.

JVD Yes and the various committees were composed mostly of San Jose Art League members and we had at least a good seven or eight of these committees called various things. This is one where a good brochure was developed finally but we'd always meet for maybe six months at the most and then you gave a report and you did things like this, brochures, and the City simply was not ready yet even though they structured the committees and they were official committees, some of them called City Council Committees, City Manager Committees and they did various things but they were not ready to go into a major art program so we were thanked and simply put down this long list of priorities again. After I came back from a sabbatical leave in 1965, I was asked by the Fine Arts Commission that was in existence at that time if I wanted to head a committee to convert this old library into an art gallery, community gallery, and I was appointed then

by the City Council to go ahead and do this. But I said only if I was given between two and three years to not only form a committee but to also come through with a very lengthy and significant program and to build up community support, credibility -- all of these things, you had to build up force; I knew that and I wasn't going to be part of another losing team and it had to be done differently. So anything that was different would have been all right but I chose this approach, time, and frankly there were a couple of Council people that we wanted to get out of office because they were always anti-art, anti-everything, and so we needed time also for that. And they agreed to that and so it took our committee almost three years to come up with a program that we thought was worthwhile and we were biding our time also; we weren't simply wasting time. I knew then that the City Council members were probably reading one out of ten reports we sent so we sent numerous reports and met with them and most of this is not down in record form but we met with them -- every person that I thought eventually should be a part of an association who would love the museum, manage the museum, I took them down and introduced them to all of the City Council members and the Mayor and we did that a number of times. Well, by the end of three years they were a little bit tired of seeing us and probably were convinced at that time that

we had some credibility, we had lasting power, and that we would be certainly inclined to finish a job if we were to start it. And so when we made our report in February of 1969, there was no way that we could lose. We already knew that we were going to win, the Council didn't have the money to allow us to go into a major renovation but we were allowed to use the building and so we did it.

ME And what building is this now?

JVD The YOMA(?) which is now the San Jose Museum of Art.

ME The old San Jose Library.

JVD Yeah yeah, and we did some light work, some modifications in there and when we hired our first director (clearing his throat) I had initiated the program that would allow us to afford a director because money was a problem then, it is now but it was even worse then. So we got San Jose State University to agree to a joint position of part-time faculty member and the director of the museum so the director then became a half-time faculty member at San Jose State.

ME (Question inaudible.)

JVD Del Kolb, K-o-l-b, was our first director and so he taught a class at San Jose State that we had structured and it was called Musiology and that lasted, you know, for quite some time, even when we changed directors it still continued. So the position of the Director of the Museum in those days was called Community -- God, it had several names. (Clearing his throat) Did you notice that in that report?

ME Yeah _____.

JVD Well, it became affordable because of these two positions.

ME You want to name some names of the people on the Council who were resisting? I mean, years from now it won't make any difference.

JVD No no, I'll do it, sure because we had to fight four, at least four, separate battles to save that building. That is not down in my report.

ME Let's do this then.

JVD All right, but yes it's very important because there was real threat to get rid of that building just as they had

gotten rid of the old City Hall, which you recall, and in those days there was nothing, you didn't have the community groups that you have now who are strong enough to resist things like that.

ME And who was the Mayor in those days?

JVD We had, let's see, in....

ME The City Manager, was that _____?

JVD Well you had City Manager Hamman who was very instrumental and politically connected to a couple of people. He and Bob Morgan were very good friends, now there was one point there where the Triton Museum wanted to have -- Bob wanted the City to have his private collection as the official art collection for the City of San Jose; they would maintain it, it would still be his collection, but they would maintain it and exhibit it.

ME Now he had a building in downtown San Jose.

JVD They wanted to use his building.

ME And on what street? It was on Second?

JVD Second and San Fernando and he wanted simply to get rid of our building and had so stated.

ME (Question inaudible.)

JVD _____ . And in fact the Triton Museum has a copy of all that right now and well, that's another story. Bob Morgan was a friend of mine, he had asked me to be on his....

ME He was _____ the head of this committee.

JVD Yes, I know, but he had asked me to be on his, what do you call it, on his board, museum board and at that time I did not like his collection and told him so. Bob had the right spirit but he did not have the sophistication in art. He would get his art collection in the strangest ways, even coming to my office one time and I was cleaning up and he noticed a little drawing that I had done as a demonstration for a class in _____ art and simply asked, he said, "John, can I have this?" And I looked at it, I says, "Oh yeah, take it." Well the next time I see him it's hanging in his museum and framed as a part of his private collection. I said, "What have I done. I don't want that kind of work to represent me." So he had that way of getting things done and managing

that way. So I refused to be on his board and when he was really desperately trying to get the City to accept the Triton Museum as the official museum for the City of San Jose of course we resisted, but by that time I had a great deal of force behind us, not only the University but the Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Association, about 7000 signatures that we had gotten simply from people who were interested in getting the museum going, that kind of thing. So we resisted but at one point Joe Pace, who was Mayor at that time, called me into his office and the first thing he said was, "John", he says, "I think we ought to drop that museum development program", and I just told him, I said, "Joe, stop right there." I says, "I know who put you up to this", because he and Bob Morgan were good friends. I says, "I know who put you up to this and there's no way that we're gonna stop working on it." I told him, "You or anybody else...." (Recording ends in mid-sentence.)

End of Side 1, Tape 1.

Side 2, Tape 1.

JVD And I immediately said, "Joe, I know who put you up to this and there's no way that you or anybody else that's in the administration level is going to stop this program

right now", and at that I just turned around and walked out the door. And Dutch Hamman tried to intercede also there and in fact there were newspaper accounts to this, but he was not getting the signals that he was hoping for from various _____ in the community. I do have to give Joe Pace a lot of credit because two years later when we were opening the museum and we had a reception Joe Pace at least humbled himself enough to come up and simply tell me, "John, you were right", and that was it and I knew exactly what he meant at that point. But you know that's....

ME It's hard to believe that anyone would resist that, what it is now.

JVD Well you do realize that I could not have done that two years earlier because we were too young and not sufficiently enough into structuring this program for the museum and we didn't have the backing, but by the time Joe Pace called me into his office we were sufficiently strong as an organization with the backing from various sources in the community and I knew that we could get along pretty well.

ME Now it looks like in the background material you gave me that for a while you had a gallery in a Victorian home in

downtown San Jose.

JVD Ah, well you have to realize that the San Jose Art League started in 1938 and it was the only art organization in San Jose so it became the official San Jose art organization. The City of San Jose allowed the Art League to use the Civic Auditorium building, one room in there -- I think it was Room B -- as a gallery but that was shared by other community groups so occasionally if they wanted the room you had to clear all the art out and then go back and put it up again, you see, after the meeting, a very bad way (laughter) of managing things. But after that the San Jose Library became available and we got two very very large walls and panels that we had designed to put into that library building.

ME This was while it was still a library too, right?

JVD Oh yeah, right. So, again, city organization so we were using a city facility and we had permanent exhibitions, changing exhibitions. We brought in significant artists from around the country even but promoting mostly local art. San Jose Art League had a philosophy of simply supporting local art as much as possible, but we would bring outside shows in for the art group and we did that and out of all of these committees that we were having

throughout the years trying to develop an art center because the Art League knew that you had to have one eventually. We were always at the front of things and at one point in the '50s, early '50s -- 1951 -- we started a building fund. We would have these, in those days they were the grab bags -- you know, members would donate works -- now they call them auctions but we eventually changed the name to "Collectors' Choice" and we would get the money from those events and put it into a building fund. At one point we offered the City of San Jose our building fund account if they would match it to develop an art center. Well, they couldn't do that so we bought our own building in 1959, that's the old Victorian building at 428 South Second Street, yeah, near the corner of Williams and Second Street. And we spent a few months renovating that structure into an acceptable gallery and knocking walls down and doing things like that and in early 1960 we had our first exhibition and with that -- and I think this is important for local history -- with that San Jose got its first building that was used exclusively for visual art. You see, while we were at the library we were using a building that was being used for something else and again at the Civic Auditorium, but this was San Jose's first building. Now in those days it was all right because before that we had nothing so it was very acceptable. It eventually got to

a point where even that building was not sufficient to do the job well so we moved it elsewhere to various places, now we went back to the old Bank of America Building on First and Santa Clara Street and we have a gallery downstairs. We are still using the Victorian building on Second Street but we rent the upstairs to local artists with studios and we use one large room for classes so the Art League has classes, has always had classes, and we have a sales and rental program, also previous, and we are going to start that again too to do something for the community.

ME Now I can see the difference. When I was reading I got mixed up between the library and this other guy. I thought maybe both were the same thing but they're two separate entities actually.

JVD Yes, when we bought the building on Second Street, we discontinued the exhibitions at the library.

ME Eventually you turned the library into the museum.

JVD Oh yes, yeah exactly.

ME All right, that should clear us a little bit now unless you can think of something else you want to say about ____

_____ (voice trails off).

JVD

Well look, I think there's one very important part of that story that leads up to that. In 1964, there was a major effort to develop what was called in those days the "John F. Kennedy Art Center Complex" and this was to take in that whole area of the space in front of the Civic Auditorium on San Carlos Street across the street from the Hotel Sainte Clare where the new convention center is now and where the library is. There wasn't any library yet at that time. In there around the corner on Vine Boulevard and that whole complex behind the Civic Auditorium, the second phase of the convention center, which we now call the old convention center, did not exist yet at that time. That whole area was to become the John F. Kennedy Art Center and it was composed of a large theater. We brought in John F. Warnecke from San Francisco and Warnecke was a good friend of the Kennedys. So John Warnecke designed, with the help of our committee -- he came up with the "once you realize what you wanted" and all that bit -- he came up with a beautiful design of a new theater and original, designed just for San Jose -- San Jose's very own creative, original building -- and a smaller theater and then a library, a museum and a smaller gallery. That was to be the whole complex and the theater was to go right across the street from the

Hotel Sainte Clare right on the corner of Market and San Carlos Street, that was to be the corner for the theater. We met for an awfully long time in the fall of '64 until I went on sabbatical leave in September of '64, from the beginning of '64 to that time we met, which is not a bad period of time. And when I left the City Council had accepted our plans and the Planning Department, everybody had accepted it; many people in the community knew what was going on. And so I went on my sabbatical leave assuming that this was going to be established. When I was in Italy during that sabbatical leave, I got a letter from one of our committee people saying, "John, it looks like we lost again", because Joe Pace was instrumental -- he was Mayor -- he was instrumental in casting out John Warnecke's plans completely and bringing in Teliose & Associates, the old Frank Lloyd Wright group who gave us the circular building that we have now in the CPA. Well, we knew that the circular building was simply a copy of already two other established theaters in the country, one in Tempe, Arizona and the other one in San Antonio, Texas; so we got a copy of two other buildings, period, which was terribly disturbing, and all the other plans were cancelled, the museum and things like that. That's when the old library was offered, and what is interesting, the conclusion of all of this is that John F. Warnecke had this theater design, you know it was

quite beautiful and I still have sketches of it in my files, and he was asked by the Kennedy set to do something that the Federal Government wanted, to commemorate the name of President Kennedy. And they had stated an interest in the performing arts so they called John Warnecke and Warnecke had created a design that he did for San Jose; he took that plan to Washington D.C., changed it a little, made it a little bit bigger and all that, but basically what you have in Washington D.C. now, which is called "John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts", is the design that was originally made for San Jose. A lot of people don't know that and we could have had a one-of-a-kind structure in San Jose and unfortunately we simply got something that is a copy of something else and it has contributed to this very very awkward image that we have in San Jose of having a lot of buildings with no originality.

ME In a hodge podge that don't match.

JVD Right, yeah, which is sad. We're becoming known as a community of simply buildings that have convenience but they have nothing else.

ME Well, thank you for that story, that's very _____.
The Italian-American Heritage Foundation, let's get on to

that now, in another part of your life.

JVD Okay, well in 1975, again because of this early interest on the part of the Bicentennial Commission that the City of San Jose had at that time and getting us involved in the military band program and then later on Up With People, an organization that the Federal Government had going around the country at that time, composed of a lot of younger people who simply were good performers and they were simply public relations for the country at that time, 1976, you know, '77, and in '75 also they were going around. Well we brought them in in January of 1946 and had another program.

ME '46 or '76?

JVD Oh, '76, sorry, yeah 1976 and it turned out very well and it continued to what at that time looked like a successful image as an organization and we became rather confident and it encouraged us to go permanent and change our name from the Italian-American Bicentennial Association to the Italian-American Heritage combination. So we went along and at first just meeting anywhere that we could, the Armory -- we had several of our meetings at the Armory over on Hedding Street across from the county buildings. And as a trade-off with the army we went into

the structure and improved their electrical system and did a variety of jobs simply as a thank-you for letting us use the facility (coughing and clearing his throat). So at that time our organization had gotten up to a point of close to 3,000 members and we would have these meetings, we would have at least anywhere from 800 to a thousand members and you had to feed them all so they were huge, huge successful events. And we were looking for permanent quarters and Don Lima from Lima Mortuary had a room that was called The Presidential Gallery over on Delmas Street, at that time it was a room composed of portraits of all the Presidents of the United States up to that point and by computer they were simply connected with a tape that once a light was directed on a certain President there would be a message regarding this President and his contributions to history. And Don Lima had done that as a Bicentennial, what do you call it, project -- something that he offered to the community. Well most of that building was given to the Italian-American Heritage Foundation, and it was when I became president of the organization in 1978, as headquarters so we used that for, oh, a few years and got furniture from some of the security companies who were making changes in their interior design and so we got furniture and structured ourselves fairly well. We heard that the Lacurto(?) family, who owned the Hawaiian Gardens, were

interested in at some point selling the facility so as president I sent two of our people, our board members, over to the site to make some contacts and Mrs. Lacurto, who was still alive then, did not want to sell right now, you know, while she was alive, but the boys had told our representatives that as soon as their mother died that they would be very interested in making some arrangements with the Italian-American Heritage Foundation. So we established a group, a holding company, meanwhile; Mrs. Lacurto died the next year so we got our group going and tried to establish something with the Lacurto family.

ME Now the Hawaiian Gardens are on Alma?

JVD On Almaden.

ME Almaden at?

JVD Close....

ME It should be Alma.

JVD Close to Alma Street.

ME Right, must be across from the El Rancho Drive-In.

JVD Exactly, yeah.

ME That's not there anymore.

JVD No, not the drive-in, no, they have a....

ME Complex, a housing complex.

JVD Complex of condominiums or something, yeah. Well anyway, through our inability to come up with the necessary money we lost out in the purchase of it and that ended that project, and it was sold to some of our members who were a little holding group and they bought it. We then simply became interested in looking for other facilities and the old Letterman Hall over on Fourth Street, 425 North Fourth Street, became available. The Letterman Hall was simply a group of letter carriers from the post office who had an organization and they would simply meet there in a hall and they would rent the building on occasion to local community groups. But that building was the first Bank of America computer building; in those days that computer was called "Irma." And that building then was a superior building in construction, all cement walls, it was an all reinforced concrete ceiling and floors and all that, it was intended to be a very strong building. And that whole building held just one

computer, that's what computers were in those days, you know. But then eventually the Bank of America sold that and the Letterman bought it. We bought it from the Letterman organization and are still in the process of paying it off, we're close to finalizing those payments right now. But we have a cultural center there, which is not only a hall that occasionally we rent out to people, but we use it for all functions that pertain to the organization. I have designed in there a gallery and a library, into the facilities, so that the gallery now is past what is the beginnings, we have about 110 photographs right now; that ultimately will tell the story of Italian-Americans in Santa Clara County through photography so we're getting old photographs, anything before 1950, so we have the old-timers who have started businesses in Santa Clara County, the ranchers, the cattle people and the wine makers and other significant individuals who either had businesses, professions or worked for the community or created events or organizations, anything that tells a story of some kind. And we have those photographs and at least by November 15th of this year we plan to have at least 200 photographs and at that time we're having a reception and we're inviting the community to come in to see this process and we want it to be important. And we're doing a genealogical recordkeeping program that I hope

eventually will be important. The library is coming along very well; we've got contributions of books from the Italian government and also from a variety of sources and eventually we want it to be a research center for anybody who wants to come in and simply do some kind of a study. I started also framed relief maps of all the regions of Italy that we have in the facility now so as you come in and if people are interested in their roots or their background they can go up to these maps and see exactly where their families came from. And they're very lovely because the relief maps are quite interesting and they're very effective so _____ usually too, I think they contribute something to the cultural center part of it. So we're designing a portable portion of that photography exhibition that we occasionally can take out into the community when we relate to other programs like for instance when the birthday of San Jose Beautiful goes on, and I'm one of the commissioners on San Jose Beautiful, but we participate in that event every year and we have a little booth and we bring something out simply to tell some kind of a story.

ME I'm sure the Museum would be interested in having that as a portable exhibit too.

JVD Yes (clearing his throat) I came out to the Museum very

early to see what they had in the way of photographs and unfortunately they did not have too much.

ME (Comment inaudible.)

JVD Sure, well frankly I'm leading up to that because I think at some point we would like to, if you want it, have some of those photos copied maybe and give the Museum a collection that they could use in some way.

ME Well I'll follow up on that for you _____
_____ (remainder of comment inaudible).

JVD Fine, sure, and that should be important to them.

ME It says here that you were awarded the title Cavalier in Italy. What's the story there?

JVD Well it's a knighthood so in 1978 somebody submitted my name because I had done apparently a certain amount of work for the community in general but also for the Italian community too so I was granted this knighthood at that time which is something that I cherish very much. Unfortunately there's no money that goes with it. (Laughter by ME) Part of it I think was too because of the fact that I had started this Italian-American

Cultural Festival and now it's held at the County Fairgrounds the first weekend in October.

ME That's coming up _____ (inaudible).

JVD Yes and I gave up the chairmanship of that two years ago. I guess now it's three years ago, in 1988, but then it was intended to be a contribution to the local image as far as cultural events and festivals are concerned and so we created an ambience that was meant to be somewhat theatrical; we wanted people to have a good time, to feel as though they were going somewhere so we created these facades, designed all the facades that went in front of booths, that gave the booths an impression of being buildings and so when the festival's all set up it looks like a small Italian village and that was something quite new and novel at the time because nobody else was doing that. And we designed this festival cart for the City of San Jose, it was meant to be a contribution to San Jose because it was our effort. You see, we started this cultural festival in 1977, that was San Jose's 200th birthday and so we coincided the festival with that bicentennial event. And I designed this cart that had the story of San Jose on it, not the Italian story, simply the _____ story of San Jose, so the cart was quite original -- you won't find anything else like it

anywhere else -- and I got a couple of my students to eventually help out with the painting of it, but it's a story of old San Jose and new San Jose up to that point in painting and sculpture; the sculpture on it depicts the early immigrants, Indians, up to some of the later and maybe even future pilgrims who would come in so there's a change in image, cultural and sculptural image, in people and that's been borrowed by different community organizations of course.

ME Where is it now?

JVD It's stored at the Italian-American Heritage Foundation Cultural Center.

ME (Comment inaudible.)

JVD It would be nice, yeah.

ME Where is the festival gonna be this year? Is it downtown?

JVD Fairgrounds.

ME The Fairgrounds.

JVD

It started at the downtown. I wanted it because I had been on the committee that designed the what was then called "The Paseo de San Antonio." When I was on the Fine Arts Commission I simply dealt with the local committee that was designing that whole what was to have been a site for festivals and for community events and things like that, and the large fountain was designed, built and upgraded successfully for a long time. Well that was the site of our festival for several years until San Jose started breaking up the streets to put in railroad, you know, that kind of thing, tracks and they were breaking up the streets and so we moved to the Plaza Park in front of the Fairmont Hotel and we stayed there for two years, 19- I guess that was '84 and '85, and then the streets kept getting torn up and so finally we had to go out to the Fairgrounds in 1986 and we were always intending to come on back and now the people who manage the festival feel that they don't have quite the crew to put up things fast and take 'em down fast because you have to open up streets and close streets and that type of thing so this is where we are right now.

ME

Okay. You know what I think, we still have to talk about St. Joseph's but I think I want to do that another day.

JVD

It's up to you.

ME That'll give me a chance to come back too _____
_____ (voice trails off). In
the meantime _____.

(End of Side 2, Tape 1.)

(Side 1, Tape 2)

JVD Did you want to go over these points that I think I
neglected?

ME Yes. Okay, let me give a little intro and then we'll
just _____. This is October 14, 1992, I'm in
the house of John DeVincenzi and he's giving the second
part of an oral history interview for the San Jose
Historical Museum. You have some points that you wanted
to bring up now.

JVD I think I neglected to go over these the last time but
there were two sabbatical leaves that I took from San
Jose State University, both of them were spent in Italy
in the area of Lucca primarily because my wife has
relatives there and the house in which her mother was
born was available and so we were able to very
comfortably use that while we were there. It worked out
very well, it was centrally located in Italy and pretty

much most of Europe itself so it was easy to get to other places from there in their area. But I think what is crucial here is that the first of those sabbaticals in 1964 and 5, that school year, was taken by me primarily to offset what I thought was happening to me at the time. I was a watercolorist primarily, although I had been working in oils and other media too, but most of the work that I was doing and the awards that I was winning were all in the area of watercolor, but I think what had happened is that I was becoming somewhat predictable -- something that you don't want to admit too soon to the gang -- but winning too often, succeeding too much and then the challenge is gone and you tend to become repetitive in a few things and it took a little while to admit that. And I purposely took this leave to go somewhere else and so Italy was the likely place and I wanted to know a little bit more about the history there too _____, the marvelous works of art that you can _____ history books over here, and so we went there for that particular reason. So I changed in media, I went from being primarily a watercolorist to working at that time exclusively in oils, changed subject matter -- most of my subject matter had been, oh, city scenes and landscapes and subject matter of that kind, a few figured things but mostly subject matter that was around that I could see very easily. So I went into

figure composition primarily, simply telling the story of people as they lived daily lives and Italy was a good choice. It was away from the usual scene and I got a studio there; one of the neighbors heard that I was looking for a studio and she cleaned up a very nice place that she had and asked if I would be pleased with it and it was marvelous, one of these stone buildings that we'd love to have over here.

ME Yes, been there for centuries.

JVD Exactly and I started painting bigger and more complex themes and for me I think it was the best thing that had happened up to that time. The garret gave me greater courage to go on to other things, I became a better artist. The second year, primarily because I had seen all -- I had seen some of the folk art in a sense -- I got around to calling it "environmental art."

ME That was the second sabbatical?

JVD Second sabbatical which was....

ME And that was in?

JVD 1972 and 3 and I had recalled some of the art of the

people done by untrained people, they could be farmers working in straw stacks that oftentimes would get to be 40 feet tall and then they would be carved. Now straw in Italy is used for bedding for animals so there's no need to go in there very carefully and cut away at it, you can use a pitchfork or an axe and do the job but these people were using a sharp knife and getting up on a ladder and starting at the top and cutting and making a curve and they were sculpting, see, and these were farmers. So I wondered how much of that kind of activity was going on in Italy, or anywhere for that matter, but Italy was my concentration. So I took a year off (coughing) simply to make that assessment and it was a great pleasant surprise because I got involved in the art of the festivals because there people oftentimes will come in and simply do some very creative things and the use of just natural rocks in place of monumental, well designed, architecturally designed, things where you commemorate something -- 12 pilots that died in Pisa, for instance, after the war and the people there wanted to do something but they didn't have the money to have something architecturally designed so they went out and got a road builder to help out with this equipment and they got 12 huge huge boulders and bought 'em and managed to get from the city a little piece of land across the street from the airport and they covered that with slate and then

they put these rocks on top and that was it, very beautiful. And so I call things like that "environmental art", it's outside where you can see it and it affects every day living. So farmers, ordinary people doing things like that, sculpting trees, shaping them, doing a variety of things, changing nature to some extent for another reason usually involved with beauty of some kind. So I spent the whole year just doing things like that and doing some drawing and taking notes on the side and a lot of traveling.

ME Did you stay at the same place?

JVD I have stayed in the same little town but now there was a, oh, what used to be a little store and it was empty and they were in the process of trying to convert it into something else but hadn't started yet and so some of our relatives said, "Gee, maybe we can get that place for you to stay, we'd like to have you stay nearby", the other house was not available anymore. So it just happened to belong to one of my wife's relatives and so it became easy to go ahead and get that place; we rented it and fixed it up (stopping to clear his throat) and the other relatives brought in furniture that they (chuckling) managed to get somewhere and it became a very comfortable house, well heated, for the one year

that we were there so it worked out very well.

ME Did you have your whole family with you?

JVD Yes, well the second time my older daughter was doing something else in the United States at the time but my younger daughter was with us. And then my older daughter came to visit us twice during that year and that worked out very well. So both sabbaticals were very worthwhile and led me to other things, the whole idea of working with the environmental art that way had not been any part of my discipline prior to that time but it was something that interested me and I think it led to finally creating festivals here in the San Jose area, getting on the committee that designed the format for the Tapestry in Talent in 1975 and lending what expertise I had managed to get up to that time, and then in 1977 starting the festival for the Italian-American Heritage Foundation and that was simply to honor San Jose on its 200th birthday and so I designed that festival and recalled many of the things that I had seen and studied regarding festivals

ME What's involved in designing a festival? It must be enormous.

JVD

I think anything that you're going to do well has to be designed to some extent. There's even a strategy of traffic, there's even strategy in putting booths in _____ places that will allow for good traffic and stages for entertainment that you have -- and we had three stages -- are put in places that simply attract people to them to activate other areas like booths and arts and crafts and how to relate the arts and crafts to each other and to make sure that there's something going on pretty much all of the time so you don't allow for bad spots even if you have to bring in strolling musicians to activate an area and keep some movement going, some activity going. You do that and then you encourage people who run booths to also bring instruments and music and so there's music on all of the time, and I preferred the live music, musicians doing things, so we would encourage that and so people would bring mandolins and harmonicas and accordians and things like that. And I played the accordion too so I would get out there and do something with it. So it's that kind of thing and we didn't do it the first year but after we got people interested in designing facades for their booths which we rented but they're (clearing his throat) sterile looking things _____ when you see them so the facades were simply imitations of buildings that you were likely to see in small villages, things like that, and if

they didn't want to design them themselves I would design them and I had a crew that would make these things if that's what people wanted, but they could make their own and they could design their own as long as we approved what they were doing. And so our festival picked up a uniqueness that you don't see in other festivals.

ME (Comment inaudible)

JVD Yeah, and it was an atmosphere; I wanted it to be a theatrical experience where people come to it and they're simply entertained all of the time, that type of thing more than anything else.

ME Well it's tremendously successful, I know, from year to year the Tapestry in Talent especially and the Italian Festival is still going on now too.

JVD Well I chaired it for 11 years and I thought it was time to quit, somebody else (laughing) could do that. One area that I think I neglected last time also was in the museum development. The report that we submitted in February of 1969 simply reflects a three year involvement on the part of my committee but the City didn't have the money, even though it was approved -- we finally got it approved in February of 1969 -- but the City didn't have

the money to go in there and start renovating right away but they allowed us to use the building as is. We asked for that permission to use the building.

ME This was the old library, yes?

JVD Yeah right, so we did, you know, makeshift things but our committee worked beyond that up until the beginning of 1972 actually and we simply kept meeting as a committee and our job was also to start the association that would eventually manage the museum and we did that. I gave 90 lectures, I remember, on the museum development and how we thought it would fit into a downtown scheme that in itself was being redeveloped; it was like a second Renaissance and we were a part of it and the downtown development had exciting plans that simply encouraged me to spend some time getting slides and making a presentation that we gave again at least 90 times and we would go to coffee houses and have little coffee glasses, sometimes there would be 10 people there, oftentimes they would be out in auditoriums with 200 people. So the idea was to develop support for the association and the support for the museum and we did that. We started an organization that now still exists and runs that museum. And then the part of our job was to give the museum a good start because we knew that ultimately a young museum

would have to seek grants somewhere and you had to prove community support, not only from the average person but from the artists of the community also. So I got 40 of my artist friends, mostly San Jose State University faculty but other artists also, I got them to donate works of art to the permanent collection at the museum and so we started that permanent collection that they have. And I won't mind saying now that I knew that artists would not benefit tax-wise if they donated something to a non-profit organization, a cultural organization, they could only claim the expenses involved in producing the painting, which was not very much -- a canvas and some paint, a few brushes -- and that doesn't come up to a great amount; it's the work involved that's important. So I had done a little bit of research and realized that there are other ways of letting the artists benefit so I had my artist friends exchange works with each other -- now I probably will get in trouble with (chuckle) our tax people but anyway it's worth saying -- they then exchanged works with each other and then they donated each of these works to the museum. Now they became patrons of the arts; as a patron of the arts you can donate something and benefit tax-wise.

ME _____ contribution.

JVD Well, it's simply, you know, if the government's going to play games then you simply play games along with them and it is being done by every museum in the country now.

ME Well, this won't _____ near the IRS _____ (laughter).

JVD (Laughter) but it's something that we did and I'm glad we did that also. There was a sculpture court that we had, although it didn't appear in the report, and I've got a little letter covering the reason for that. We did not want to overwhelm the council with another development so we agreed to leave that portion of the report out but it remained in all plans and maps that were being made at that time of that area for an awfully long time. We had gotten approval from a construction company that was working with the City at that time; the name of that company was Taylor, Woodrow and they were based in London, England and they had an agreement with the City of San Jose to develop that block where the Fairmont Hotel is right now, from Market to First and then San Carlos to San Fernando around the museum. We got approval to have them finance our sculpture court and tie it in with their development and they were quite happy with that. We got it architecturally designed and it was a nice, nice idea and it was going to tie in with

the basement of the museum. The idea was to allow you to go down on the outside to a lower level that went to the basement where we were planning to have a little sandwich shop and refreshment, something very light as most museums tend to have _____. But Taylor, Woodrow simply delayed too long, the City got tired of waiting and they finally simply cancelled Taylor, Woodrow out and brought in another company. By that time it was my sabbatical year time, 1972, and I had to leave to go on the sabbatical leave but we lost out on the sculpture court but it remained in the plans for years after that. But now there's simply something else that's taken its place; there's the large square that you have between the hotel and the museum, which is all right, but I'm disturbed by the fact that it doesn't have benches there and things like that for people to sit down and to contemplate and to dialogue with each other. I think squares should be designed that way, however. Anyway, those are the things that I think needed to be covered and whatever else you want to talk about.

ME What about St. Joseph's?

JVD The cathedral?

ME Yes, what's the story there?

JVD

Oh, I think that story has to be preceded by my involvement in the school of St. Joseph's. My children went there, my oldest daughter started there in the late '50's, I think it was 1957, and I simply got involved with the process of education there and became president of the Dads Club and, you know, did things like that, started bingo, brought in the first electronic board in Santa Clara County to simply supplement the game of bingo, and getting involved with the church too. They had a nativity scene that somebody had designed some years prior to that but it was in rather bad condition; however, for a few years I headed the committee to put that nativity scene up at Christmas time and this was the late '50's and early '60's. And when I returned from that first sabbatical leave in '64 and 5, I realized that something had to happen with that nativity scene so I designed a new nativity scene with a backdrop that was at the time, I think, 12 feet tall and about 12 feet wide and it was made out of polyfoam, which is a substance that is made from two liquids, when you mix them one acts as a catalyst with the other and it makes a foam and you can sculpt this by using heat lamps and cold packs or cold fans to control elevations and heat will make it grow, for instance, whereas cold will recede it and keep it in place. And then, depending on how thick you poured the liquid, you're going to get additional growth and

then you can sculpt it and do a variety of things while it's taking place; you have to watch the odor of it, you work outside, and rubber gloves. And I had a few of the dads help with the process of constructing it; we had to build a wooden frame and we made a stand and there was a landscape-like effect with the same material and we used the figures that St. Joseph's Church had at the time and simply fitted them in place so they would look natural and you wouldn't notice the stand _____, they just fit in place. We did that and that survived until the renovation of the church into a cathedral.

ME And where was this? Where was the nativity scene? Was it at the school or in the church?

JVD Church. It was always in the church in that niche that's to the left of what used to be the main altar area. People who remember St. Joseph's Church will know that St. Patrick was in that niche and so we would at Christmas time cover St. Patrick up and have this scene in front of and below also. And it worked out very well, we got a lot of interesting comments from people around the area because it was a uniquely-designed and sculpted piece and so it was an art piece. Well with the advent of the cathedral it no longer would fit in that area because of the configuration of the interior with the

central altar and a few things like that. We had to move it elsewhere so now it sits on the north transept in one area but I had to scale it down, it was too tall to begin with, so I redesigned it before the Cathedral was opened in 1990 and it was almost like designing it all over again and constructed it all over again and scaled it down, changed the color to fit the new color scheme of the Cathedral and made a new nativity scene for it and that is being used now.

ME Is it still there?

JVD At Christmas time it goes up.

ME Oh, okay.

JVD Yeah, no in between we take it down and store it.

ME I'll remember at Christmas to go get a picture.

JVD Okay, fine, and it's enjoyable. Yeah, it contributes something. So my work with the Cathedral and being on the Iconography Committee -- the Bishop had asked if I would serve on that committee -- is based on all the work done before that and also in 1964 there were three of us, Sam Della Maggiori, who was a supervisor of Santa Clara

County at that time, a John Russo, who owned a sheet metal shop and did iron work, and myself were on that Building Committee and we did a major renovation in 1964, exterior and interior, new roof for instance -- not the copper roof that we have now but it was a new roof. The problem with the Cathedral was that it shifted and in the process of shifting the roof would simply split and we knew it at that time but in 1964 you didn't have the money to go into a first-class restoration job as you did this time around, but you did the best that you could considering the budget that you had. So we brought in a San Francisco church decoration team to simply redo but not change. I have always been enough of a classicist to want to preserve that which was done, and especially if it was done well, and not change it just for the sake of change; it's nonsense. And this was designed very well on the inside. Father Schiocchetti, who was an artist from Italy, but he was simply expelled from Italy in the '20's by Mussolini because he had been doing some anti-fascist things so he was invited by the bishop at that time to come to San Francisco.

ME Give me his name again, I should get that in writing.
Father....

JVD Luigi S-c-h-i-o-c-c-h-e-t-t-i and a very experienced

church designer and a good artist and he had done a lot of work in Italy and so when he was here, and this was in the '20's -- he came in 1924, I think -- and the St. Joseph's Church had not been decorated on the inside up to that time, it was simply plain walls.

ME In the '20's.

JVD Yeah. The church was built in 1877 but there was no major interior decoration and so in the '20's, 1924, there was this competition and Schiocchetti was simply asked to submit some ideas and he did and of course with his experience he won very easily that competition and he immediately sent for his assistants who had worked with him in Italy and they came over and they worked in the old, what was then the old St. Joseph High School, which was no longer being used because in 1906 it was condemned; it was right behind the church attached to the church and the Fathers lived there in a part of the building and church offices were there, for instance, and there were two of some of the huge rooms that the high school _____ were available and so Schiocchetti and his assistants simply painted there for two years from 1925 to 1927 and did all, all of that work at St. Joseph's Cathedral is Schiocchetti with the exception of the stations of the cross. But all of the work that

Schiocchetti did was painted on canvas and simply glued up against the ceiling later, all of those figures, and some areas where dry fresco process was used, where you actually paint right on dry plaster, and in those areas it doesn't involve any figures at all, it's simply a decorative design based on flow in vegetation and it's quite handsome and it ties in nicely with the rest of that. Well, Schiocchetti and his assistants did all that, designed the light fixtures and the new frames for the stations of the cross paintings and a very significant contribution and they made St. Joseph's Church the most decorated church with original art in the entire West Coast that we know of and it still can claim that. There are many churches that are beautifully decorated but if you look at the decoration closely it's wallpaper or copies of other artwork. Here at St. Joseph we had original art. All the saints that are painted in that Cathedral and church before are portraits of local people.

ME

Is that right?

JVD

Yes, Schiocchetti's own niece, for instance, was used as a model for the Virgin Mary in several of the paintings, three that used to be over the altar and now are over at Santa Clara University in the archives because they

couldn't fit into the new scheme, but there's a painting up in the north transept, the Wedding of the Virgin, and that is actually a portrait of Schiocchetti's niece who is still alive and lives in San Francisco. Yeah, and there was a priest and an assistant pastor who was the model for St. Joseph's and then there were other individuals who were used as models for the saints. Now we don't know all of them because that has been lost in history somewhere and we have been trying....

ME Now "we are" you are talking about....?

JVD Well, people who've been working on the Iconography Committee and who were closely associated with the work that has been done at the Cathedral. We do know that if you look at the altar, I mean at the dome, around the rim of the dome there are little angel heads with wings. Now we do know that the angel heads are actually portraits of the two young Hart girls, daughters. Now the Hart family was a very important family in San Jose, they had the Hart's Department Store, for instance, that was on the corner of Market and Santa Clara Street, and Mr. Hart was a good patron of the church and he invited Schiocchetti over many times for dinner and in the process of those dinner engagements Schiocchetti obviously noticed the two little girls running around and Alex Hart _____ tell

this story now and he got permission to sketch the girls,
he did that, and those sketches then became the....

ME Angels.

JVD Heds of these little angels, yes.

ME Now this is the same Hart family that had the kidnapping?

JVD The kidnapping, right.

ME Alex Hart, what is he? A son?

JVD He's the son of the....

ME He's still here now?

JVD Oh yeah, Alex is very much alive and after he sold the
stores, I think he went to work for I. G. Magnin as a
buyer of goods and I see him periodically and served with
Alex on the Fine Arts Commission for the City of San Jose
for 10 years and got to know him very well, but he loves
to tell that story.

ME You think he might be a good subject for some of this,
too?

JVD Oh yes, yes.

ME They always ask us to get other names.

JVD Well Alex would be a good one.

ME I'll _____ (rest of comment inaudible).

JVD So eventually we may be able to track down all of the others also and it would be nice.

The Cathedral itself has become, and rightfully so too, I think, a museum and a performing arts center also in the tradition of all European Cathedrals. In Europe it is not unusual to have a parade inside one of the large, large cathedrals; sometimes they start there and then they end there but in between they're out somewhere, and orchestras, concerts; in many of the European Cathedrals they're very common. So I've always encouraged somebody who related to that church first with Father Dondero(?) as pastor and allowing local groups, Opera San Jose for instance, and San Jose State University Chorale group has given a number of concerts there when it was a church and also now that it's a cathedral, and Opera San Jose does the same thing, and there are other groups who use it and it would be wonderful to find a good organist who can

play that Odell organ that we have up there, one of four in the country, and when it was purchased in the '20's it cost \$5000; right now it's a museum piece and there's no telling what the cost would be. I've given it a value of \$500,000 just to have a figure there but it could be more valuable than that, but it's an organ that has been completely restored and so it's very much like a new organ right now. I know it would be wonderful to have a good organist give a concert on that organ, for instance, eventually. It's a great thrill because it's the vibration of the sound simply goes right through _____; it's a nice experience. So what you see at St. Joseph's now is an almost completely finished Cathedral. The south transept altar is not finished yet, it's a matter of money. It got to be very expensive because as you began to take away certain areas, you'd notice new problems and so the problems are not planned for and so it simply became adapted to the budget and the budget became greater than what you anticipated to begin with, but it had to be done. It was good enough of a building to preserve and when you deal with original art and a uniquely designed structure, you see it would be a shame to tear it down so you have to restore it as you would do with a good museum and things in the museum also and so that choice was made to go ahead and restore it knowing that it was going to be expensive; however, it

became more expensive than we anticipated. But it's a marvelous building with a new roof and pilasters around the outside of the building that go from the eaves all the way down into the ground, at least 10 feet down into the ground and they're filled with concrete and steel rods; they've now stabilized this huge building from shifting and so we won't have the problem of getting the roof torn up, as was the case before. And we could not correct the slant of the building; on the north side of the building it's actually 11 inches lower than the south side. Now when you're inside the building you really can't tell that but if you're outside looking at the north transept against what used to be the old telephone company building next door -- it now belongs to the Diocese and it's actually a parish office and there's going to be a gift shop there, a religious gift shop, and there's a hall and there's a program for the poor also that comes out of that building so it's a very serviceable building, it's been restored completely, earthquake proof, but if you compare that building with the Cathedral building you'll see that the Cathedral leans towards it and when the telephone company building was constructed in 1907 they got too close to the foundation of the church and as a result the church began to lean slightly on that end and to try to correct that now was going to be a major, major _____ that would

have been added to the cost and so the engineers decided to leave it alone. So it doesn't hurt anything, it's stabilized and it works fine. The only time you notice is when you're outside and it leans slightly and does no harm at all. What is interesting about the church, the property there, the telephone company for years and years and years paid the St. Joseph's Parish I think it was a dollar a year, or something like that, because the eave of their building went over the property line (laughter by ME) into St. Joseph property. The Fathers didn't want anything for it but the officials at the telephone company thought at least a nice little gesture like that would (laughter). This was told to me by one of the managers of the telephone company, I hadn't known that myself.

ME That's a great piece of San Jose _____.

JVD (Laughter) But anyway, the two towers in front are museums and they have memorabilia that related to the church that could not be used in the same way in the cathedral so again they were good art pieces, the baldachin, for instance, that used to stand over the tabernacle on the main altar, all one piece of glass, you know, beautiful beautiful sculpted work of art, and well you have to preserve that. So these towers that are on

three levels now are museums and when they're all finished they will have all the memorabilia that's worthy in there. I commented on the fact that the only work of art there that's not authentic was the stations of the cross but they are tremendously valuable. They are copies of entities that were done for the cathedral in France; isn't that something, I can't think of that cathedral now in France. However, a few local families who were very wealthy managed to get some French artisans, they commissioned them, to do these copies from the originals. There's an article in the turn of the century before they came here to St. Joseph's, now these were done just for St. Joseph's Church and they were displayed in Paris and one of the comments made in the article was that they seemed to be better quality than even the original. However, as an artist I know that it's the idea of a painting that is important, not necessarily its technique so you can't take away from the originals; there's where the idea was born. But during the First World War those paintings and the cathedral were totally destroyed, bombing and fire, so these paintings that St. Joseph's Cathedral has now are the only, only copies of those originals and that makes them valuable as historical pieces of art.

ME

And you don't remember the name of the cathedral. Maybe

it will come to you.

JVD It will come to me, yeah.

ME We could research it.

JVD Okay.

ME Is it in Paris?

JVD No no, not right in Paris. It's in one of the little, the cities not too far, though.

ME (Comment inaudible.)

JVD Well, all right. Sorry that I can't think of it. So they contribute, there's no question. The quality is excellent, they're oil paintings on canvas and just marvelous paintings, they've been completely, completely restored during this restoration period, by that I mean new canvas was put on the back. You had to peel off -- there's a process of adhering with paste now, not glue, with a paste *

(NOTE: Side 1 ends in mid-sentence.)

(End of Tape 2, Side 1.)

(Tape 2, Side 2)

JVD

The process involves adhering tissue, 7 to 8 layers, onto the surface of the painting. Now you must use paste, you can't use a strong glue, it's too heavy, and letting that dry and then turning that over later on and working on a good * flat surface and now a painting that has to be restored generally means that the canvas is (loud noise of something being hammered) in bad condition, otherwise you don't bother doing this. So now you peel that canvas off and all that tissue on the front adhered against the surface of the painting holds the painting together so you peel off all of this canvas with tweezers, anything, it takes a long time and it's expensive to do this and once you get it all cleaned out then you simply adhere a new piece of canvas to that and most restorers will use a beeswax substance to go ahead and adhere the new canvas to the back of the painting and keep in mind that you have a painting now you have that you have to be very careful. You have the thickness of paint, which may be a 32nd to a 16th of an inch, sometimes a little heavier, and then you have like a gesso that has been put on canvas as a _____, well it fills in the pores of canvas and all that, so a little bit of that is there and that's it, so just a little over a 16th of an inch. If you're not careful you can go right through that painting

and ruin it so it's tedious work. But now those paintings have been completely restored that way and changed. One of the paintings, the second station of the cross, had a part of the painting -- you couldn't detect it too well when they were up higher in between the windows, the stained glass windows, that's where they were first on this church, and much higher and you couldn't detect a slight technique and style change; the color was accurate so that made it read fairly well from a low vantage point but when the paintings were taken down you can easily detect the style and the technique change. Some were along the line, we're not quite sure what the reason was, some were along the line; the painting may have been ruined and somebody who was less of an artist than Yoshi(?) should have been tried to restore it and did a good job of color but not so good in technique and style. So that painting has been restored now too and the figures all look pretty much alike. So you have 14 good, good excellent paintings in there that constitute a great fortune if you had to sell them on the open market today, and that you know is hard to say; paintings like that could be a quarter of a million dollars each or more on today's market, yeah, no question about that. Excellent quality paintings. So it's a museum and what is of special significance for me is the fact that I was a member of two restoration teams for

that building, the one in 1964 and I preserved all of the good art in it and didn't allow any of it to be changed; it was simply corrected color-wise, some stripes that were on the wall at that time and made a couple of other little adjustments that somebody along the years had painted on and they didn't belong so we had all of those taken out and I carefully preserved the rest of it. And then the restoration that took place prior to, oh, about four years there after we started in 1987 and went along for all those years. But what is of special significance to me is that it's right across the street from the San Jose Museum of Art and I was the chairman of the committee that got that started.

ME Your little corner of the world.

JVD Well, no, it's like two museums being across the street from each other and one little area of downtown San Jose. I think that's nice. And that cathedral should be treated as a museum, yeah; when it's totally finished it will be, I think, very -- I think it's a special place now but it will be even moreso when it's finished. There are two sculptures that we had commissioned out; we had a competition and several sculptors, West Coast artists, there were some from the State of Washington, Oregon, California who submitted sketches and we wanted a figure

of Saint Claire, who is the patron saint of Santa Clara County, and then a figure of Saint Joseph, who was the patron saint of San Jose, so in looking over the sketches that the sculptors submitted we selected a young Italian Sandro Lorenzini, that is Sandro S-a-n-d-r-o and then Lorenzini is L-o-r-e-n-z-i-n-i who has a studio in Savona, Italy, that's just north of Genoa, and his philosophy and his ideas were superior, we thought. Sandro Lorenzini also did a little part-time teaching at San Jose State University as a guest instructor so he knew the area fairly well, but he was the one sculptor who came down and assessed the whole cathedral. I took him through, showed him the interior even when it was being worked on and generally the scale of things and the other sculptors didn't do that so that impressed us also, he was a little more concerned. So he is in the process of doing these two huge pieces of sculpture out of wood and they're using the same wood that is being used for hundreds and hundreds of years in Italy. It has to be seasoned very carefully and he slices pieces up, then glues them back together again to prevent possible cracks and so it's a matter of shifting and changing the grain relationship, he's doing a very good job. He came down with a heart attack and his doctor advised that he not sculpt for a while and it just so happened that as a member of the Sister County Commission for the County of

Santa Clara we had to go to Florence, Italy -- I think I related it last time or did I, I'm not sure.

ME (Comment inaudible.)

JVD Okay, well then we had Santa Clara County week in Florence....

ME Oh, no (remainder of comment inaudible).

JVD Oh, the last week of May and the early part of June. And I brought, along with Dr. William Gogler(?) who really did a great deal of work on this getting sculpture together, primarily San Jose State University faculty -- primarily because we were trying to relate this major university with the Florence University, the academia there and those two major art schools. The year before that Florence had a celebration here in Santa Clara County and then we called it simply "Florence Week" and they brought down some things from their own community that was of great interest to us -- an exhibition, for instance, of the works of Bugalevski(?) and a sculpture show of Italian sculptors and American sculptors, seven each, and we had our exhibition at Triton Museum, the Bugalevski exhibition was at the DeSaisset University* in Santa Clara.

ME When was this?

JVD This was in 1991, last year yeah. So for 1992 we reciprocated by taking things that are somewhat special to us -- we took the same seven American sculptors and exhibited them with the same seven Italian sculptors but this time we showed that sculpture exhibition at the Academia Gallery. If you know Florence where Michaelangelo has his David in that marvelous gallery, well just to the left of that there's a door and that door leads to this gallery where we had this exhibition....

ME (Comment inaudible.)

JVD A good coupling, you know, but it turned out very well and it got nice reception from the Florentines. And we took a videotape of our transit system here in Santa Clara County because Florence is very much interested once again in re-introducing streetcars. They recognize the problems of automobiles. So we had that tape and we converted it into Italian so they could understand it and we brought a jazz group, three young jazz musicians from this area who gave two concerts in Florence, two locations, and one of them was near a jazz school that Florence has and those students were ecstatic listening

to this American jazz group. And we brought some dried fruit from Santa Clara County, we got the fruit from the Benech Farms; the Benech family happens to be related to me through the mother who's of Italian heritage whereas the father is of French heritage.

ME How do they spell that?

JVD B-e-n-e-c-h. And I got them to donate some dried fruit which we took along and the Florentines were very appreciative of that actually because they have a lot of fruit but not very much of the dried fruit that we had given. So we spent a beautiful week and the Florentines simply entertained us royally. We had these marvelous dinners in the Medici Palaces, there were five Medici Palaces in different locations throughout the community and each was better than the other (laughter) and just going inside of these structures was an experience. Anyway, while we were there my wife and I after that week we rented a car and drove around and visited some friends and some relatives also and we went up to the Genoa area where I have relatives. And close by to Genoa you have Savona where Sandro Lorenzini is sculpting so I called him up and he came and picked us up even and we went to his studio; I spent a nice day with him, and his health is back again but he was going to go see a doctor about

another possible bypass. But while we were there I took a videotape of the sculpture and having him describe simply what had happened and what he was doing -- he speaks a good English -- and other works that he had in his studio at that time so we have a nice tape of that and I've shown it to some of our people on the Iconography Committee who were concerned about these two pieces of sculpture. And one of them, the one of Saint Claire, is partially finished but it needs a lot of work yet; the other one of Saint Joseph, which will also have a young teenage Christ next to it, that in itself is unique, is still lying around on the floor (chuckle) in a form of boards but we're hoping that his health will.....

ME How old is he?

JVD Sandro? Oh, he's a young man, I'm not precisely sure of his age but I would suspect that he's in his forties, around 44, 45 years old, something like that. No, he's a young man, very gentle man, very kind, very simple person, very religious actually. He's got a theater design background, props, and a lot of his artwork shows that kind of involvement and the scale of it and the ideas that go into it are like theatrical pieces like _____. So we're hoping to have those in there.

ME Did you have a timeframe set _____?

JVD No, well they were supposed to have been finished already but now somehow they're much beyond that schedule date. We're hoping that his health regains itself completely for certain but at least enough for him to finish the works. As he told me, he may have to bring in some assistants, he's got one person who rents part of his studio and he's a good sculptor and he was telling me that he's probably going to have him do part of that so one way or another I suppose we'll get that work finished.

ME And where will they go?

JVD They will go into the two niches that are to either side of where the main altar was in the church and that will be the east side of the church. There are two niches there now that are empty and so they will go in those two niches, as major focal points.

ME Now you said that you got some of the parts of the church as it was being....?

JVD Oh, well that is in 1964.

ME That was from '64, oh.

JVD There are two confessionals, we had four portable confessionals, you could move them around. They were large sculptural things, beautiful, and so two of them were not going to be used at all so we took those in the back yard of the church, covered them all up and we would decide later what we were going to do with them. Well, that was in 1964 and I was supervising the interior of this design of this church that was being restored at that time, setting the color scheme and spending a good deal of time there with the people who were actually doing work. And that was the year that I was going to Italy for my first sabbatical so I was gone for a year and the church was almost finished; I had set the colors and everything already, so I left knowing they could easily finish the job and they did, they did a nice job. But I was gone for a year and when I came back somebody had dismantled the confessionals and some of the boards were broken and they were sort of just scattered around and Father Dondero said, "John", he says, "We might as well get rid of these." And I said, "Well look, you know, if we're gonna get rid of them let me take some pieces home." So I got a pickup truck and loaded up a lot of pieces and they sat around my yard for years. And then when I built this gazebo out here I used the pieces of

the confessionals and I glued them back together again, reshaped some things, but the entrance to my gazebo is actually the entrance to the confessional that we had at St. Joseph's Church (laughter).

ME How lovely (laughter). I'm gonna get a picture of that.

JVD No no, and then there are other parts around here, pew dividers, for instance, across the church. They're like walls that were simply set in front of the pews allowing for an aisle to go across the church. Well, we were trying to sell those things, pews and things like that, pieces, and we did sell some to people who were interested at a very, very cheap price. Some of the pews, a local church, small church, that was being started bought some of those but there were many of them left over so a lot of us who worked on the committee simply took the darn things home and I've got a few around here, pews and walls and these dividers, and I've used them constructively to make things out in the yard.

ME St. Joseph _____? (rest of question inaudible).

JVD Oh yeah, between St. Joseph's and Holy Family Church, another one that was torn down, you know, sad mistake to

tear that church down.

ME That was the one on....

JVD San Fernando and River Street.

ME San Fernando, right.

JVD Not many people knew that, but in its shape it was a copy of St. Peter's at the Vatican.

ME Oh, _____.

JVD The Greek cross concept, which means you've got four transepts all the way. And that would have served as a beautiful _____ museum along the Guadalupe River, but it was torn down. Going back, on that Greek cross concept, St. Joseph's Church, the Cathedral now, according to our architects and engineers who researched around, is the only church building in the United States that is based on a Greek Cross Plan. Now that Greek Cross Plan is a Renaissance concept, it originated in Italy during the Renaissance and many churches then were built with this arrangement of four transepts all alike so actually you could get five squares, four around the outside and one in the middle, and you'd have the plan

for that church. Churches before that had long, long, long -- simply structures, you know, the Christian Cross Plan -- so St. Joseph's can claim then this uniqueness of being the only church building in the United States that has this plan.

ME And it was designed like that originally in 1877?

JVD Originally, exactly, and if you go in now, with the restoration there has been a little adjustment on the inside of the floor plan down in the _____ so it knocks it off a little bit but that is (coughing and clearing his throat) _____ Greek Cross Plan as Holy Family Church was. So it's sad to see things destroyed that have something that could contribute to a community.

ME What did you think about the old City Hall? _____
_____.

JVD No, well I've always liked it and if it was for me I would have kept it there, but at that time in the 50's, the early 50's, you didn't have any community groups, any citizens groups, who were strong enough to really resist that.

ME There was some resistance, wasn't there?

JVD Oh, it was so mild, by a few people, but politically it couldn't do very much. What is interesting, and a lot of people don't know this, is that that building was a copy of one in Germany and I think it's either the City of Mainz or Stuttgart -- but I think it's Mainz and identical -- San Jose got the plans from Germany.

ME Huh, and is that building still standing?

JVD The one in Germany was totally destroyed during the Second World War. The Germans knew of the one in San Jose, they contacted the officials in San Jose asking if it would be possible to purchase this building and have it shipped over, you know brick by brick, number your bricks -- it's done.

ME Yeah, it's been done.

JVD Yeah, and our officials, however, were not interested at that time so a few years later they tear it down! I find that....

ME That's an incredible story.

JVD Yeah, typical of what some of our administrators are capable of doing, but that's part of our history. I

would have held on to it and designed the park accordingly around it in a rather nice way. I don't mind the design of the park right now, I think it's probably one of the better parks that we have in town; most of our parks are a little bit sterile, with seats stuck there -- they don't relate to each other and next to each other and you simply are gazing out in space, instead of grouping them in such a way that people can communicate with each other, maybe even with a little table there or something like that would help; however, that's what that is.

ME In building the Cathedral, or getting the money to restore the Cathedral, was there much political resistance to that?

JVD No, not really. Some of it was gotten through fund raising but not enough to do the job on the _____.

ME Was McEnery involved in it?

JVD Uh no no, not directly, he made his contribution as a lot of other people did, but no he was not involved directly. Frank Fiscalini was chairman of the committee that dealt with fund raising, but you know like everything else, it came at a time when everybody is looking for money.

Every organization was in fund raising and you had the early beginnings of the recession taking place so it was a bad time really to go into fund raising; however, some was gotten, several people, but not enough to do the job. And the Bishop knew that the diocese had _____, he wouldn't say. St. Joseph's School eventually we sold to the City of San Jose and I think the price was somewhere around \$10 million dollars so moneys like that would go for....

ME _____ for the support _____ the diocese.

JVD Yeah, oh they're hoping that some philanthropic individual perhaps will come along and see the magnificence of this building and importance of it and perhaps contribute to it.

ME Well, that's wonderful. I think we're getting kind of close to _____ so it's been an hour and fifteen minutes now.

(End of Side 2, Tape 2.)

* (Transcriber's note:

The underlined portions of this transcription, at the end

of page 73 and the beginning of page 74, were missing from the duplicate tape. These portions were transcribed from the Master Tape.)